

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-19 are pending in the application. Claims 9-11 are allowed.<sup>1</sup> Claims 5-8 and 16-18 are only objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims. Claims 1-4<sup>2</sup>, 12-15 and 19 are rejected.

**35 U.S.C. § 103:**

*Claims 1-4*

Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto et al. (US 4,703,537 [hereinafter "Yamamoto"]) in view of Ogawa et al. (US 3,969,785 [hereinafter "Ogawa"]). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection in view of claims 1-4 being canceled in the Preliminary Amendment dated March 12, 2004.

*Claims 12-13*

Claims 12-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Kohda (US 5,446,292) in view of Ogawa. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection in view of the following remarks.

Kohda and Ogawa do not teach nor suggested the features of amended claim 12. The Examiner initially asserted that Kohda discloses features of claim 12 including a reading unit and a feed system for feeding a stimuable phosphor sheet to the reading unit. A cleaning brush 111

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<sup>1</sup> Applicant notes that claims 9-11 were canceled in the preliminary amendment dated March 12, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Claims 1-4 were also previously canceled.

of Kohda (see Figure 9) is applied against the claimed cleaning mechanism. The Examiner relies on Ogawa for disclosing an air suction unit D to provide a pressurized atmosphere in a housing of the cleaning brush.

An exemplary feature of the present invention provides air flow across a sheet, as shown in Figure 7. To further define claim 12, Applicants describe that the air suction unit provides an air flow, which travels in a direction from one edge of the stimuable phosphor sheet towards another edge of the stimuable phosphor sheet. Ogawa does not disclose this feature and, therefore, a combination of Kohda and Ogawa would not have taught or suggested the features of amended claim 12. Instead, the fan assembly of Ogawa draws air so that toner particles are pulled away from the brush towards the filter bag 10, which is different than the features of proposed claim 12.

Applicant therefore submits that amended claim 12 is patentable over Kohda and Ogawa, such that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn. Claim 13 is also patentable, at least by virtue of its dependency on claim 12.

*Claims 14, 15 and 19*

Claims 14, 15 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Kohda (US 5,446,292) in view of Ogawa. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection in view of the following remarks.

The Examiner relies on Kohda and Ogawa for features similar to those applied against claim 12, while further contending that the brush 2 is provided in the housing A1. An exemplary

embodiment of a brush roller assembly disclosed in the present specification includes an upper brush roller and a lower brush roller, as shown in Figure 6. Applicant amends claim 14 to define this feature by reciting that the brush roller assembly includes two brush rollers disposed in said housing. Claim 14 also describes that one of the brush rollers is in contact with a first surface of the stimuable phosphor sheet and another of the brush rollers is in contact with a second surface of the stimuable phosphor sheet, opposite the first surface.

The combination of Kohda and Ogawa does not disclose at least this feature. Instead, the applied cleaning mechanism of Ogawa only has one cleaning brush 2, and does not teach nor suggest the claimed upper and lower brush rollers. Applicant therefore submits that the combination of Kohda and Ogawa does not teach nor suggest each feature of claim 14 requiring the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) to be withdrawn. Claims 15 and 19 are also submitted as being patentable, at least by virtue of their dependency on claim 14.

**NEW CLAIMS:**

Applicant adds new claims 20-26 to obtain more varied protection for the invention. Claims 20-21 further define claim 12; and claims 22-23 further define claim 14, to include features not taught nor suggest by the applied art. Claim 24 is provided to capture the allowable subject matter of claim 16, and claims 25 and 26 depend from claim 24, while including features similar to those of original claims 17 and 18.

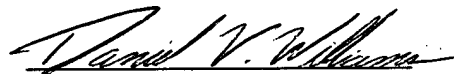
AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111  
Appln. No.: 10/798,565

Attorney Docket No.: Q80437

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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**23373**

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: January 18, 2005